Improving Road Infrastructure

2682. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that roads carry 61 per cent of the freight and 85 per cent of the passenger traffic and there is a great mismatch in the availability and usage of the road network as 35 per cent of roads are single lane, poorly surfaced and heavily congested; and

(b) if so, the steps Government propose to take to improve the infrastructure by having greater focus on the roads?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) Out of the total freight and passenger traffic carried by railways and roads, the roads carry 61 percent of freight and 85 percent of the passenger traffic. As per available data as on March 2002, out of the total road length in the country 35.6% was of single lane standard (excluding the roads constructed under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana and Jawahar Rozgar Yojana) and 52.6% was unsurfaced.

(b) This Ministry is primarily responsible for the development and maintenance of the National Highways. The State Government concerned is responsible for roads other than National Highways. The Union Government has taken up several initiatives for improvement of National Highways including four laning, six laning and construction of expressways etc., under the various phases of National Highways Development Project (NHDP), Special Accelerated Road Development Programme in the North East Region (SARDP-NE). Apart from this, the National Highways are improved under the Annual Programme of the Ministry as per the traffic, *inter-se* priority and availability of funds.

Inland Waterways Transportation in Orissa

2683. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to develop Inland Waterways Transportation (IWT) for ferrying cargo through perennial rivers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a study in the matter has been conducted by some Authority for transportation purpose;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) what is the action plan of the Centre to develop IWT in Orissa to improve the economy of this region?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Three waterways namely Ganga from Haldia to Allahabad, Brahmaputra from Dhubri to Sadiya and West Coast Canal from Kottapuram to Kollam, along with Uydogmandal and Champakara canals have been declared as National Waterways and are being developed for shipping and navigation. Three more waterways namely (i) Kakinada-Puducherry Canals along with rivers Godavari and Krishna, (ii) East Coast Canal along with river Brahmani and Mahanadi delta and (iii) River Barak in Assam are being processed for declaration as new National Waterways.

(c) and (d) A comprehensive study of various transport modes was conducted by the Planning Commission through National Transport Policy Committee (NTPC). In its report submitted in 1980 it is mentioned that the navigable waterways (including waterways navigable by country boats) extend to 14,544 kms out of which 5685 kms were suitable for mechanized crafts. IWAI also undertakes techno-economic feasibility studies of various individual waterways to assess their potential for development and declaration as national waterways. Some individual studies have also been conducted by State Governments.

(e) The proposed National Waterway-5 comprising East Coast Canal along with Brahmani river and Mahanadi delta includes 532 km of waterway in the State of Orissa. It will lead to opening up of the hinterland and faster development of the economy of Orissa.

Funds sanctioned for NHs in Bihar

2684. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR : Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state: